

# PRESS RELEASE

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CITY CONTINUES TO MAKE MILESTONE IMPROVEMENTS IN STREET MAINTENANCE**

*Unprecedented strategy expected to yield better results than ever*

INDIANAPOLIS – In an unprecedented strategy in Mayor Ballard’s mission to improve city streets, the Department of Public Works (DPW) have begun efforts to crack-seal more than 1,400 lane miles of city streets by the spring of 2010 in one of the most significant preventive maintenance efforts the city has ever seen.

“It’s good sense and fiscally responsible to invest in projects that have proven results,” said Mayor Greg Ballard. “Due to a combined effort of crack-sealing, better pothole repair methods and more efficient management of resources, we’ve averaged about 5,000 less pothole complaints from July to November 2009 vs. the same period in 2008.”

In previous years, the accomplishment of very little crack-sealing by the city had a major impact on the number of potholes residents and commuters had to navigate when driving city streets during the winter and spring of 2008. In addition to implementing Six Sigma strategies to improve the pothole repair process, city officials committed to a more proactive approach budgeting \$1.4 million for crack-sealing work and purchasing 4 new crack-sealing machines. By the end of 2008, city operations crews completed over 250 lane miles of crack-sealing contributing to significantly less pothole complaints and a greatly decreased number of potholes across the city.

Directed by Mayor Ballard to find ways to do more to protect citizens and their vehicles from existing street damage, department officials combined the resources of the engineering and street maintenance divisions of DPW. This strategy for improving existing street infrastructure allowed the city to contract out almost 1,200 lane miles of crack sealing work to supplement approximately 250 lane miles of crack-sealing work planned by the street maintenance division.

Funds for the effort are a result of under-run savings of about \$2 million from other engineering projects.

“As we are doing in all areas of city infrastructure, we will continue to work to creatively identify ways to better protect residents as they travel city streets,” said DPW Director David Sherman. “With the preventive maintenance of crack-sealing work, roads will be better and there will be less damage to vehicles.”

Potholes are formed when water and moisture freeze after seeping under streets through cracks in the pavement. The frozen water causes the pavement to expand resulting in a concave area underneath the road surface once the frozen water melts. A pothole results once the weights of traveling vehicles break the hollow area under the pavement surface. Sealing the cracks in the road surface before water and moisture can enter them is a proven method of preventing the formation of potholes.

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The current cycle time average for pothole repairs has remained constant from July through November at 2.2 days. The number of pothole complaints received this time in 2008 was 17,412. Current requests this year are 5,112 less at 12,300.

For more information about the Chuckhole Kaizen process click on the following link to learn more about the city's efforts in partnership with Eli Lilly to improve pothole repair methods in Marion County.

[http://indianapolis.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=223](http://indianapolis.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=223)

To report a pothole online visit: <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Mayor/Pages/Pothole.aspx>.

You may also call the Mayor's Action Center (MAC) at 327-4622 to report a pothole.

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